



Healthy Living



Curriculum Three (3)
Week 14

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Healthy Living

based on
THE PRISM
WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAM

WEEK FOURTEEN:

Walking With
Courage...
Breaking
Through
Barriers!

A NEW LOOK AT PLATEAUS

What does the word “plateau” mean to you in the context of weight loss? If you are like most, a plateau is an expected physical reaction to initial weight loss. You may believe that plateaus are unavoidable and a “necessary evil” of any sustained weight loss program. This way of looking at plateaus may have allowed you to justify a lack of progress in your weight loss journey. What you believe about plateaus will greatly influence how you face them if and when they occur.

The word “plateau” is defined by Webster as: “A period of little or no progress in an individual’s learning marked by temporary constancy in speed, number of errors committed, etc. and indicated by a flat stretch in his learning curve graph.” As you can see from this definition, a plateau is based more on what is taking place “within” than “without.” Through your daily commitment to the program guidelines, you are constantly increasing your awareness and understanding. You are learning more each day about your eating behaviors and how they affect your progress. Therefore, there are no plateaus in your journey to the TRUE YOU!

How does this new look at plateaus affect your attitude concerning the possible slowdown in the amount of weight you are losing? It should help you to disconnect your “perceived lack of progress” on the outside from the wonderful strides you are making within. This week’s lessons address different types of “self-imposed plateaus” and how to break free of them. You will also look at the biological reasons your body adapts to change and how you can plan to address these BEFORE they occur.

Plateaus need not occur if you are willing to make a commitment to continual growth in your life. This may mean that you need to look harder and deeper into specific areas of weakness which still exist. YOUR FOCUSED EFFORT WILL ENSURE STEADY PROGRESS ON YOUR JOURNEY TO THE TRUE YOU!

OPTIONAL SCRIPTURE READING:

II TIMOTHY 2:10-12

“For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory. It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him; if we endure, we shall also reign with Him...” (The New American Standard Bible)

PROVERBS 13:4

“The sluggard craves and gets nothing, but the desires of the diligent are fully satisfied.” (New International Bible)

PERSONAL EVALUATION

1. Before today, did you feel you had reached a plateau in your journey? What things contributed to this feeling?

2. After reading today's lesson, how have your feelings about plateaus changed?

3. In the past, how have you allowed plateaus to discourage or completely end your weight loss efforts?

4. How will your new understanding prevent this from happening again?

THIS CONCLUDES WEEK FOURTEEN – LESSON ONE

AVOIDING SELF-IMPOSED PLATEAUS

Yesterday you were introduced to the concept of self-imposed plateaus. Today you will look at some of the reasons why plateaus can begin to surface and how they can delay your progress.

One factor which may contribute to a plateau in your journey is an attitude of “non-acceptance” of the TRUE YOU. As you learned in Phase One, your subconscious mind plays a major role in the way you perceive your body image. This image contributes greatly to your attitudes about the progress you are making and your ability to succeed and reach your final destination. Are you comfortable with the changes that are taking place in your life? How do you feel when you look in the mirror? Are your first thoughts ones of excitement about your new appearance, or do you still see a person who causes you to fear or doubt success?

These feelings of concern can create a reaction within you that causes you to “stop” your progress and “rest” on a plateau. This “rest” can turn into a false sense of satisfaction with your current condition. Have you thought to yourself “Even if I do not lose any more weight I look OK?”

Others may be reinforcing your sense of satisfaction with complements about your appearance and praise for your efforts. New classmates may see you as their example, an “expert” to be admired. You may also have lost enough weight to no longer be considered a part of the “fat society.”

These attitudes of satisfaction with your current state can create a complacency about your eating behaviors, allowing you to slip back into your old bad habits. **IF YOU ALLOW THIS TO HAPPEN, THE TRANSFORMATION PROCESS WILL STOP AND YOU WILL NOT ONLY EXPERIENCE A PLATEAU, YOU WILL RISK RETURN TO THE STATE YOU WERE IN WHEN YOU ENTERED THIS PROGRAM OVER THREE MONTHS AGO!! IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT?! THERE IS NOTHING WORSE THAN THE PAIN OF RE-GAIN!**

Are you ready to examine some of the symptoms which contribute to this attitude of satisfaction and self-imposed plateau? Do any of the following statements apply to you today?

1. You need to continue to eat even when you are “full.”
2. You “save up” calories to justify overeating (a mini binge).
3. You justify self-indulgence through statements like, “I’ve worked so hard all day – I deserve this treat” or “This one binge won’t make me fat again.”
4. You are beginning to believe what others are telling you – you have the “answer.” This attention creates an attitude of superiority that is not founded on the transformation within, but on a changed appearance.
5. You are too focused on the “I” statements... “I want to be thin NOW” or “I am sick of counting calories” or “I am sick of this kind of food.” This Impulsive Impatience drives you to dissatisfaction with your rate of progress.

Be careful! Your self-Imposed plateau of satisfaction could become a “MESA!”

WEEK FOURTEEN – Lesson 2

**A MESA IS A RAISED, FLAT PLACE,
WITH STEEP SIDES OR WALLS –
DO NOT ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE CAUGHT
ON A MESA!**

**YOU CAN STAY ON THE ROAD TO THE TRUE YOU,
FAR AWAY FROM ANY PLATEAU OR MESA
THROUGH CONTINUAL GROWTH
AND HONEST SELF-ASSESSMENT!!**

OPTIONAL SCRIPTURE READING:

HEBREWS 10:22-25

“Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”(New International Bible)

PSALM 16:11

“You have made known to me the path of life; You will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at Your right hand.” (New International Bible)

PERSONAL EVALUATION

1. Which of these attitudes of satisfaction, if any, have begun to surface in your life or thoughts?

2. Are there other attitudes or actions in your life that have created plateaus or roadblocks in your journey?

3. How can you HONESTLY begin to confront these attitudes?

4. Describe some areas of new personal growth which have helped you avoid plateaus of satisfaction.

THIS CONCLUDES WEEK FOURTEEN - LESSON TWO

COURAGE TO TAKE THE RISK

Today's lesson takes a deeper look at ways you may respond to a perceived lack of progress in your weight loss journey. Begin by examining three statements which begin with the words "I should..."

1. "I should be in a smaller size by now."
2. "I should weigh less."
3. "I should not be thinking about food so much."

These "I should" statements may cause you to become DIS-couraged. You may find you are becoming less hopeful and enthusiastic. Your desire to continue seeking new growth diminishes and you feel like giving up.

The key is to stay EN-couraged. Courage is what helped you make the choice to begin this journey in the first place. It is this courage that will continue to support you as you take the "risk" of looking deeper into what complete transformation means for you. This is new, RISKY territory for you! You have decided you will no longer be satisfied with "surface change." The responsibility to move forward on a daily basis is yours! Do not allow anyone or anything to dis-COURAGE you from making this decision. Evaluate your progress with COURAGE! It will enable you to meet and challenge any obstacle...

FREE FROM FEAR – WITH BRAVERY!

Rather than being overwhelmed with the prospect of success or failure, LET COURAGE PROVIDE THE SPARK TO STRENGTHEN YOUR DESIRE TO BECOME ALL YOU WERE CREATED TO BE!

THE REWARD IS WORTH THE RISK!!

**"SUCCESS IS NEVER FINAL,
FAILURE SELDOM FATAL,
IT'S COURAGE THAT COUNTS."**

Sir Winston Churchill

OPTIONAL SCRIPTURE READING:

PSALM 31:23-24

"O love the Lord, all you His godly ones! The Lord preserves the faithful, and fully recompenses the proud doer. Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all you who hope in the Lord." (The New American Standard Bible)

II THESSALONIANS 2:16

"May our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, Who loved us and by His grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word." (New International Bible)

PERSONAL EVALUATION

1. Describe some of the risks that are involved in making a commitment to become the TRUE YOU.

2. Do any of the above risks have their roots in your past weight loss failures? If so, how?

3. What are you risking by learning more about yourself? What risks are involved in learning more about how to succeed in your weight loss efforts?

4. Do any of the risks described above involve pain? If so, what kind of pain and how does that make you feel?

THIS CONCLUDES WEEK FOURTEEN – LESSON THREE

BREAKING THE BIOLOGICAL BARRIERS

This week you have begun to look at some of the emotional reasons a plateau can occur in your weight loss journey. Today's lesson will focus more on the physical and biological reasons such a plateau may surface. You may have always felt that anything "scientific" in nature is an unchangeable truth, something over which you have no control. When you hear about how your body functions, you may automatically take a step back, throw up your hands and declare "That's the way it is." But, remember **KEY PRINCIPLE NUMBER SEVEN:**

"UNDERSTANDING WHAT MOTIVATES YOUR HUNGER PHYSICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY FREES YOU TO RESPOND TO IT IN A WAY WHICH TRULY SATISFIES YOU."

Therefore, it is through understanding your biological functions that you can have an attitude of confidence which results in actions of strength. This will give you the **FREEDOM** to continue to progress on your journey as you encounter temporary "pauses" in your actual weight loss.

The human body is classified as an "adapting organism." This means that you were created to "adjust" to temporary or permanent changes in order to survive. For example, if you go outside when it is very cold, your body temperature will lower itself gradually to adapt to the colder surroundings. Prolonged exposure to extreme temperatures would eventually cause your body to adapt permanently. In much the same way, when you "adjust" your caloric intake over an extended period of time, your body begins to adapt to this new level of energy input. If the level of your energy output remains the same, you will stop losing weight because a "new balance" has taken place. Your awareness and understanding of this biological fact can help you prepare for and avoid these "balances" which lead to plateaus!

One way to assure your energy output continues to exceed your input is to gradually increase your level of weekly physical activity (exercise) as you move forward in your journey. Consult a physical fitness professional to determine your optimal level of weekly exercise. You may only need to add **FIVE TO TEN MINUTES PER WEEK** to your exercise time in order to avoid a plateau.

Another way to prevent your body from adapting to and remaining at its new size and weight is to change the times you consume "storage" types of foods. A "storage" food is one which contains elements your body "stores" for future use as opposed to using them immediately. These types of foods contain fats and simple or complex carbohydrates. Foods such as fruits, breads, cereals, peanut butter or cheese should be avoided at the end of your day. It is preferable to consume these foods during times of the day when you are most active. Vegetables and low fat proteins are excellent sources of nutrition which the body will use rather than store as you sleep. You may go to bed "hungry" for a few nights, but the plateau will be avoided!

**AS YOU APPROACH YOUR TRUE YOU DESTINATION
AND THE ROAD BEGINS TO NARROW,
YOU MUST BECOME MORE FOCUSED
ON THE RIGHT ACTIONS NECESSARY
TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOAL -
TO BECOME THE PERSON YOU WERE CREATED TO BE!!**

OPTIONAL SCRIPTURE READING:

I CORINTHIANS 16:13-14

*“Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong. Do everything in love.”
(New International Bible)*

PSALM 18:1-2

*“I love you, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.”
(New International Bible)*

PERSONAL EVALUATION

1. How are you feeling today about becoming all you were created to be?

2. How do your feelings affect your willingness to focus on your goals?

3. Do you see any correlation between motivation and willingness to take a risk? What does this mean to YOU?

4. How has today's lesson motivated and inspired you?

5. What actions will the above motivation and inspiration produce in your life?

THIS CONCLUDES WEEK FOURTEEN – LESSON FOUR

BREAKING THROUGH YOUR “COMFORT ZONE”

In the past few days, you have examined the need to avoid what has been referred to as “plateaus of satisfaction.” Today you will look at how your adjustment to the program guidelines and food plan can create a “comfort zone” for you. Have you said to yourself “I could live like this forever” or “This is the easiest food plan I have ever had to follow?” How soon you forget! Just thirteen weeks ago your life was turned upside down by this “easy” food plan!! The “comfort zone” you were living in at that time was “broken” through your willingness to submit yourself to the guidelines of this program. It was this form of self-denial which has resulted in new positive attitudes and right actions as you journey closer to your destination.

Are you slipping into a new “comfort zone?” This program was NOT designed to give you a way to live comfortably overweight! It was designed to motivate you to achieve lasting transformation and become all you were created to be. In the same way you broke out of your “comfort zone” three months ago, you must decide today to courageously risk another “break through!” Any time you take a risk, you question whether it will be worth the pain and effort. Was not the risk you took three months ago worth it? YES!!

Self-denial is not the same as self-punishment. Self-punishment is a direct result of shame about yourself or the things you have done. Self-denial is different. When you deny yourself of something, you are focusing on your potential to achieve a greater level of success. You are willing to forego immediate pleasure for a higher purpose. This positive form of self-denial affirms your ability and reinforces your hope. You are a person who is worthy of success and willing to take the risks necessary to achieve it!

Now, ask yourself again, “Are you slipping into a new comfort zone?” Explore some possible ways you may be creating zones of comfort for yourself:

1. Do you find a certain type of food appears daily on your food journal sheet? Is this food fast becoming a necessary part of your day to day life? Are you beginning to rely on it to get you through your day? In order to “break out” of this comfort zone, it may be necessary to completely eliminate this food from your daily food choices until it is no longer important to you.
2. Do you save up your calories and eat late at night in order to avoid going to bed “hungry?” Remember, very little energy is expended while sleeping. You may need to risk going to bed on an empty stomach in order to achieve the success you desire.
3. What percentage of your daily caloric intake is unhealthy fat? Are you “loading up” on fats to help you feel “satisfied?” You may need to significantly cut back on your intake of unhealthy fats in order to “revive” your body’s rate of energy use. Try eliminating high fat dairy products from your daily food choices for a time. Drink non-fat milk! It is time to GET SERIOUS about reaching your destination!

PRINCIPLES & GUIDELINES

Did you begin this program so you could trade one “comfort zone” for another? NO!! YOU ARE ON THE ROAD TO LASTING TRANSFORMATION! YOU ARE CONFIDENT THIS WILL BE YOUR FINAL WEIGHT LOSS JOURNEY!! THE LIFESTYLE OF THE TRUE YOU IS ONE OF CONFIDENCE AND COURAGE – THE COURAGE TO BREAK FREE FROM THE “COMFORT ZONES” WHICH SLOW YOUR PROGRESS!!

OPTIONAL SCRIPTURE READING:

PHILIPPIANS 4:12-13

“I know how to be abased and live humbly in straitened circumstances, and I know also how to enjoy plenty and live in abundance. I have learned in any and all circumstances the secret of facing every situation, whether well-fed or going hungry, having a sufficiency and enough to spare or going without and being in want. I have strength for all things in Christ Who empowers me [I am ready for anything and equal to anything through Him Who infuses inner strength into me; I am self-sufficient in Christ’s sufficiency].” (The Amplified Bible)

PSALM 119:76-77

“May Your unfailing love be my comfort, according to Your promise to Your servant. Let Your compassion come to me that I may live, for Your law is my delight.” (New International Bible)

PERSONAL EVALUATION

1. Have you or are you slipping into a “comfort zone?” Describe your “comfort zone.” How do you feel about leaving that zone?

2. What risks will you take if you decide today to “break out” of your “comfort zone?”

3. What results and rewards can you see if you make that decision today?

4. Compare the risks of leaving your “comfort zone” with the potential results and rewards. How do they compare in importance when you think in terms of the rest of your life?

THIS CONCLUDES WEEK FOURTEEN – LESSON FIVE

THE REINFORCEMENT: POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND RIGHT ACTIONS

Think about the changes you have experienced in the past few months. The most obvious change you see may be your reflection in the mirror each morning. Your outward transformation is evident to all and you deserve the applause you are receiving from your loved ones and friends! But think for a moment about the other changes which are taking place within you. Do you find that each day brings with it new and exciting discoveries about life? Some of the wonders you are now appreciating may involve renewed honesty and warmth in your relationships with those close to you. Physically, you are much freer to become involved in activities which just a few months ago were impossible to enjoy. Your new feelings of self-control and inner strength allow you the freedom to once again become a participant in LIFE!!

What has fueled this new outlook on life? Why are you able to appreciate the sunrise or sunset as never before? You are the same person – many of your life circumstances may be the same – so how come you FEEL different?? It is the POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND RIGHT ACTIONS you have chosen today to make a part of your life that are the ingredients of change!! You are incorporating these attitudes and actions as a natural part of your life more each day.

Decide today to reinforce these positive attitudes and right actions in your life! They are the foundation of the transformation process taking place within you. You are now able to face the struggles that accompany your pursuit of success each day. You recognize them as a “normal part of life” and deal with them from a position of confidence and strength. You reinforce your abilities through your Agreement of Resolution!

**THE POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND RIGHT ACTIONS
OF THE TRUE YOU ARE NOT SITUATIONAL...
THEY ARE BECOMING THE STANDARD TO LIVE BY!!**

OPTIONAL SCRIPTURE READING:

PHILIPPIANS 4:8-9

“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.” (New International Bible)

PSALM 25:9-10

“He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them His way. All the ways of the Lord are loving and faithful for those who keep the demands of His covenant.” (New International Bible)

PERSONAL EVALUATION

1. Describe some situations you have experienced where it was difficult to abide by your Agreement of Resolution.

2. How did your right actions in those situations reinforce your resolution for change?

3. List at least five things about life that you appreciate more today than you did three months ago. Which ones have you experienced TODAY?

THIS CONCLUDES WEEK FOURTEEN - LESSON SIX

ACCELERATING THROUGH THE “YELLOW LIGHTS”

The lessons this week have centered around “plateaus” and “comfort zones.” You have confronted possible areas of “caution” you need to address as you continue your journey. As you think about each of these areas, remember one thing:

**IT IS TIME TO STEP ON THE GAS –
NOT LET UP ON THE THROTTLE!!**

Have you noticed the different ways people react to a “yellow” traffic light? This light is intended to warn people of an approaching change in traffic flow. Some people immediately react to a yellow light by screeching to a halt, knowing a red light is eminent. Other people hesitate for a moment in a state of indecision and then either coast through the intersection or stop abruptly. The remaining group of people see the yellow light as no deterrent to their progress. Cautiously they safely accelerate to get through the intersection and continue on their journey.

How can you apply this analogy to your weight loss journey? Do you see the “yellow light” as your cue to stop? Do not focus so much on the caution that you panic and end up caught in a red light. When you see signs of caution in your journey, is your first reaction to hesitate and slow down? Be careful that your hesitation does not cause you to miss the light or get “hit from behind!” People who are able to proceed safely through a yellow light without hesitation have their focus on their destination, not the intersections in the road. It is time for you to focus more closely on your destination. When you are faced with intersections or signs of caution, **ACCELERATE THROUGH THEM WITHOUT HESITATION!**

Apply the tools you have been given this week; courage, risk and self-denial, which result in positive attitudes and right actions. **YOUR COURAGE TO RISK ACCELERATING THROUGH THE YELLOW LIGHTS OF CAUTION SPEED YOUR PROGRESS AND HELP YOU TO AVOID PLATEAUS!**

OPTIONAL SCRIPTURE READING:

II JOHN 1:8

“Look to yourselves (take care) that you may not lose (throw away or destroy) all that we and you have labored for, but that you may [persevere until you] win and receive back a perfect reward [in full].” (The Amplified Bible)

ISAIAH 26:3-4

“You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord, is the Rock eternal.” (New International Bible)

PERSONAL EVALUATION

1. Which of the three reactions to the “yellow lights” do you most closely relate to in your weight loss journey? Why?

2. Describe how you are focusing on your destination.

3. How much attention are you paying to the “intersections” and “cautions” on the road to the TRUE YOU? How has this affected your progress?

THIS CONCLUDES WEEK FOURTEEN – LESSON SEVEN